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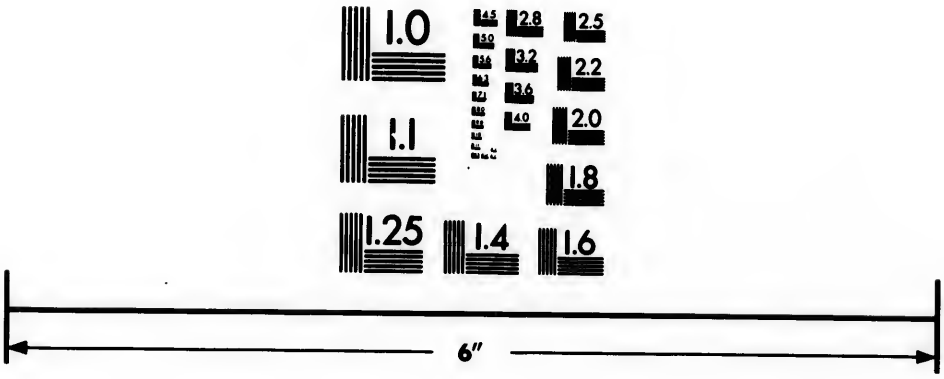


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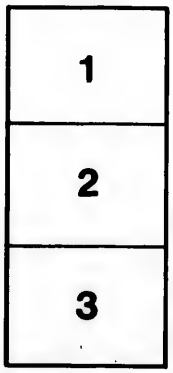
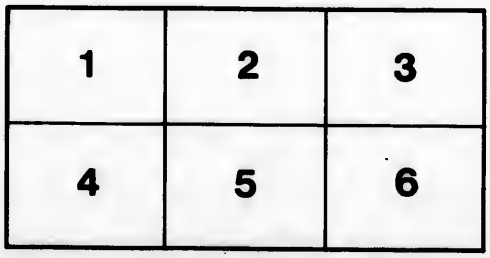


65°°

# "Peace in Believing:"

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE CASE OF THE LATE

## MARY ANNE SOPHIA WHITEHEAD,

WHO FELL ASLEEP IN JESUS

ON SUNDAY, THE 7TH MARCH, 1847,

IN THE 20TH YEAR OF HER AGE.

THE SUBSTANCE OF SERMONS PREACHED IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, PORT HOPE, ON SUNDAY, MARCH 14TH, 1847,

BY THE REVEREND JONATHAN SHORTT,

RECTOR OF THE PARISH.

"Thus, though oft depressed and lonely,
All our fears are laid aside,
If we but remember only
Such as these have lived and died."

TORONTO:

PRINTED AT THE DIOCESAN PRESS.

M.DCCC.XLVII.

"Soon wilt Thou take us to Thy tranquil bower,
To rest one little hour,
Till Thine elect are number'd, and the grave
Call Thee to come and save:
Then on Thy bosom borne shall we descend,
Again with earth to blend,
Earth all refined with bright supernal fires,
Tinctured with holy blood, and wing'd with pure desires.

Meanwhile, with every son and saint of Thine
Along the glorious line,
Sitting by turns beneath Thy sacred feet
We'll hold communion sweet.
Know them by look and voice, and thank them all
For helping us in thrall,
For words of hope, and bright examples given
To shew thro' moonless skies that there is light in Heaven."

KEBLE'S EASTER EVE.

PORT HOPE, 16TH MARCH, 1847.

*Reverend and Dear Sir:*

In accordance with the wishes, and in the name of many sorrowing relatives and friends of the youthful and beloved member of your flock, who has been so suddenly removed, by a gracious God, from this to a better world, we respectfully request that you will kindly furnish us with a copy of the Sermon delivered by you on the occasion of her death.

Endeared to the hearts of all who knew her, by the virtues and Christian graces which so conspicuously shone in her conversation and life, we feel assured that the publication of your excellent Discourse, in which her meek and quiet walk as an humble follower of her Divine Master, was truthfully portrayed, will not only be grateful and soothing to the feelings of all who now mourn the loss of one so greatly beloved, but will also benefit the whole Congregation over which you are overseer, and of which she was a member and an ornament: and especially the younger portion of it, who, in the contemplation of the life and death of so bright an example, may, by God's grace, be deeply impressed with "the beauty of holiness," and be convinced that it is not only their duty, but their truest wisdom, to "Remember their Creator in the days of their youth."

We are, Rev. and dear Sir,

Your's respectfully,

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| WM. FRASER, | N. KIRCHHOFFER, | E. HICKMAN, |
| CHAS. BRENT, | R. ARMSTRONG, | WM. SISSON, |
| R. N. WADDELL, | CHAS. HUGHES, | H. H. MEREDITH, |
| DAVID SMART, | F. EVATT, | T. TURNER, |
| H. GILLETT, | M. BAILEY, | F. H. BURTON. |

To the Reverend JONATHAN SHORTT,

*Rector of Port Hope.*

RECTORY, PORT HOPE,
March 17th, 1847.

*My dear Friends and Parishioners:*

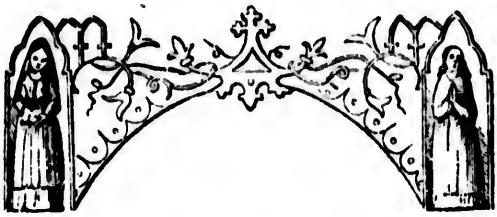
The kind feelings which have prompted your desire for the publication of this Sermon, are a tribute so justly due to the memory of the departed; and the abiding benefits which you expect to result from a more permanent, and a more generally extended memento of her worth, are so fully anticipated by me also, that I cannot for a moment hesitate to comply with your request.

In order to make the treatment of the subject more complete, I shall condense into one, the Sermons preached at the Morning and Evening Services.

May the grace of God sanctify to the soul of every reader, this humble effort to set forth His glory by making more generally known so beautiful an example of early piety and "Peace in Believing."

I remain,
My dear Friends and Parishioners,
Your obliged and faithful
Friend and Pastor,
JONATHAN SHORTT.

To WM. FRASER, Esq.,
and others.



# "Peace in Believing."

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O God, who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding; Pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; though Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity.*

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"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."

Proverbs, viii. 17.

Under the name of Wisdom, the Saviour addresses all mankind—"Unto you, oh men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. Oh ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." And how graciously he encourages them with assurances of his favor, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." Or, as Bishop Patrick paraphrases the passage, "They that love me, are beloved of me; and, as they will not fail to seek what they love, so they will certainly find what they studiously seek."

The words rendered "seek me early" mean literally "seek me at the dawn of day;" and are applicable to

that disposition of mind which led the Psalmist to say, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning." Our last thoughts at night, and our first in the morning, should be full of the Saviour: and, in proportion as our affections are really set upon heavenly objects, in the degree in which "the love of God in Christ Jesus" is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us, will our minds be occupied with thoughts of the Redeemer, and with everything that leads to Him, and prepares the soul for being "ever with the Lord." Bishop Horne says, "The true Christian dedicates to God 'the sweet hour of prime.' He opens the eyes of his understanding together with those of his body, and awakes each morning to righteousness. He arises with an inextinguishable thirst after those comforts which the world cannot give, and has immediate recourse, by prayer, to the fountain of the water of life; ever longing to behold the Divine power and glory in the sanctuary above, of which he has been favoured with some glimpses in the services of the Church below."

> "With early feet I love to appear
> Among thy saints, and seek thy face:
> Oft have I seen thy glory there,
> And felt the power of sovereign grace."

But the words, "seek me early" are also susceptible of another interpretation. If it be a pleasing reflection to think of the devout Christian, who "loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," hasting to meet his Saviour at the very dawn of day, with holy meditation, prayer and praise; how delightful it is to see the lambs of

Christ's flock seeking "the Good Shepherd" in the dawn of their existence. How sweet is early piety to Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The text is particularly applicable, therefore, to the young: and most suitable on this occasion, when you are called upon to consider so beautiful an example of youthful religion, as it is our privilege now to set before you.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Such is the gracious assurance given to all mankind: but the text specifies some who are more particularly mentioned as the objects of His favour; namely, those who "love the Lord Jesus Christ." They have a real and strong affection for Him: not a mere vague, general, almost visionary regard; but a feeling which arises from knowledge, faith, and hope; a knowledge of His character, as set forth in Holy Scripture, a faith in all that He has done and suffered for them, and an assured hope of the fulfilment of all that He has engaged to accomplish on their behalf. Feelingly convinced of their own utter inability, of themselves, to please God; conscious of the malignity of sin; knowing their own unhappy state as sinners justly condemned; they know, also, what Jesus has done for them, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of mankind. They rejoice in the conviction that Jesus Christ, being a partaker of human nature, and that "without sin," and having been "tempted in all points like as we are," sympathises with them in every fear and danger, trial and temptation. Encouraged by his gracious invitation to "come boldly," through him, "to the throne of grace, for help in time of need," an invitation founded on the

very fact of his participation of human nature, they have, in obeying his injunctions, experienced his faithfulness and love. He has sent to them the Comforter; by whose holy influence they live in the daily habit of communion with the Lord in the ordinances of the Gospel, and in all appointed means of grace. They have a good hope of acceptance through Christ; and every day's enjoyment of the peace and pleasantness of a religious life increases their love to God.

And God their Saviour loves them. To make known the endearing affection with which he regards his disciples, he uses, in His Holy Word, every expression by which we are accustomed to manifest our love to one another; He adopts the only language which we can comprehend: but how faintly does the utmost power of mortal tongue serve to exhibit the Saviour's love to those who believe on Him. In Paradise, where our mental faculties and our spiritual powers will be incalculably increased, we can better understand the nature of our Lord's affection for His people; but not till the unclouded glories of the last day, that great and terrible day of the Lord's appearing, shall beam upon the awe-struck earth, can the soul of "the just made perfect," in its re-union to the glorified body, be able to comprehend all that is contained in "the love of Christ, which," in this world, "passeth knowledge." That we may form, however, some idea of his love to those who trust in Him, He represents Himself as looking upon them with peculiar complacency, "rejoicing over them with joy, and resting in His love, and joying over them with singing." He delights to "manifest himself" to them, "as He does not to the world," and "to make his abode with them." "He rejoices over them to do them good:" imparting all

needful supplies of grace and strength to their souls: and ordering all events for the promotion of their real welfare in time and in eternity: "We know," says the Apostle, "That all things work together for good to them that love God." He accounts them his "jewels:" and what an encouragement he gives, in the place where this expression occurs, to those who delight, in social conversation, to dwell upon the Saviour's love: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels:" or, as in the marginal translation, "my special treasure." And this is a rendering justified by His assurance to all His spiritual Israel, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed; and keep my covenant; then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." "He ever liveth to make intercession" for them; and "prepares," for their reception, heavenly "mansions," which they shall inherit in due season, in glory and felicity similar to His own. If He find that His people need to be recalled from their wanderings; to be preserved from mistaking what is conducive to their true happiness; or to be prevented from "setting" their chief "affections" on created good; he sends upon them trials in token of His regard, and graciously represents Himself, in these corrections, as seeking an entrance into their hearts: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. Behold I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Thus the Saviour is with His disciples in life; and "in death they are not divided." Sometimes, as in the case before us, He manifests His love to young believers by an early advancement to that glorious state of existence for which our imperfect condition in this life is preparatory. And is there not, brethren, a special blessing in an early removal from a world of trial and sorrow, of sin and temptation? Is it not a good thing for the child of God to be "taken away from the evil to come?" For the sweet and humble violet to be transplanted to the Paradise of God.

The different stages of the inner spiritual life of the soul are not inseparably connected with the years of animal existence. How many, at an advanced period of life, are yet but "babes in Christ?" And, on the other hand, so rapid is the progress of the soul towards perfection, in some cases, that while yet, as it were, but in the morning of its existence, the matured "fruits of the Spirit" evidence a growth in grace, which assures the grieving survivors of those who are early called to rest in Christ, that their sorrows need only flow for their own loss; and which, by its example, teaches them how they also may be prepared for "the inheritance of the Saints in light." As the "good seed" sown in the heart, germinates, in some cases, with greater quickness than in others; so is the harvest earlier: but it is not premature; "When the fruit is ripe, immediately he putteth in the sickle." And is it not a happy time when the ripe grain is stored up in the granary of Paradise? Wrongly as they who use the phrase estimate the source and nature of true happiness, yet we hear, sometimes, a sort of preference expressed for "a short life and a merry one:" let us, for the vain and idle frivolities of the thoughtless

world, substitute the peace, the calm, the quiet of a conscience void of offence towards God and man; the faith which worketh by love, and keepeth the commandments; the humility which characterizes the child of God; and can we hesitate to say of the happy possessor of these heavenly gifts, that nineteen years was long enough to remain in a state of imperfection and probation? Shall we, in this case, fear to look upon the change from grace to glory as a mark of the Saviour's love? May we not, by a powerful exercise of faith, lose sight of our own selfish feelings; and, considering the felicity enjoyed by "the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord,"—a bliss which is beyond the reach of even "the souls of the faithful" until "after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh,"—can we not even "give hearty thanks to God, for that it hath pleased Him to deliver" our beloved one "out of the miseries of this sinful world?"

But if such elevation of faith is, at present, above our attainment, we can at least unite in the Patriarch's submissive and thankful resignation to the Divine will, and say in sincerity, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And this we are better enabled to do from the certainty we feel, that if we ourselves are faithful to our "high calling of God in Christ Jesus," we shall meet her again in Paradise; and that, even before the time when "we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of Christ's holy name, shall have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in God's eternal and everlasting glory." And while the experience of affliction, which this bereavement has given to us, imparts deep sympathy and fervent earnestness to our prayer in "beseeching the Lord, of his goodness, to comfort and

succour all them who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity;" with what a solemn feeling of the connection existing between ourselves on earth, and the spirits of "the dead in Christ," shall "we bless God's holy name for all His servants departed this life in Christ's faith and fear:" and how ardently shall we beseech Him "to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that, with them, we may be partakers of His heavenly kingdom."

How delightful it is, brethren, to contemplate the brief but happy life of one, who, being in her infancy "regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, and made God's child by adoption and grace, was daily renewed by His Holy Spirit:" who, in the faithful and diligent use of the appointed means, "grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" humbly endeavoured to follow in His steps; and, like Him, "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." With her, the holy rite of Confirmation was no unmeaning ceremony: she could faithfully answer to the solemn question put to her by the Bishop, "Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things, which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you?" And we know what happy evidence her subsequent character has given of the fulfilment, in her case, of the Bishop's prayer, "Almighty and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins;

strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the Spirit of Thy holy fear, now and for ever." Surely "God has defended her with His heavenly grace, and she has continued His for ever; and has daily increased in His Holy Spirit more and more, until she has come unto His heavenly kingdom." He, "who alone maketh us both to will and to do those things that be good and acceptable unto His Divine Majesty," has assuredly answered the "supplications" of the Bishop made on her behalf, as well as that of others, "upon whom, after the example of the holy Apostles," one of whose successors he is, "he laid his hands, to certify them (by that sign) of God's favour and gracious goodness towards them." "The Fatherly hand of God has ever been over her; the Holy Spirit has ever been with her; and has so led her in the knowledge and obedience of his word, that, in the end, she has attained everlasting life through our Lord Jesus Christ."

She prized the Holy Scriptures: her Bible, marked throughout with notes, interlineations, dates, and other evidences of constant and diligent study, remains, a precious legacy, to prove this. She was never inexcusably absent on any occasion on which this house of God was open for Divine Service. In her constant and regular attendance at the Lord's table she continually "renewed her strength;" being "fed, in those holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and assured thereby of His favour and goodness towards her; and that she was a

very member incorporate in the mystical body of Christ, which is the blessed company of all faithful people, and an heir through hope of His everlasting kingdom." And thus she was "assisted by God's grace to continue in that holy fellowship, and to do all such good works as He had prepared for her to walk in."

Among those good works conspicuously shone her conduct in all the relations of life in which she was placed. Her parents cannot recollect ever having had occasion to speak a single word of rebuke; nor can any one, I believe, remember an instance where they could justly blame her. Nor shall we think this to be exaggerated praise, when we consider where she looked for that aid which alone can enable us to do what is right; and how entirely she distrusted her own unassisted strength. Papers, written for no eye but her own, which have been found in her desk, if we were at liberty to make them known, would prove that we keep within bounds in what we say. They manifest her earnest desire that "her first thoughts on waking might be of God, and that she might never lay her head on the pillow without a heart full of gratitude for all His mercies." They shew that her time, as a precious talent, for the use and improvement of which she felt her responsibility, was portioned out in order and method, so that each hour might have its appropriate work, and that she might "never be idle for a moment, if she could possibly avoid it." One brief extract we cannot refrain from giving, so fully does it evince her sweet and humble spirit, and her entire reliance on that divine grace which she continually sought. "But must I not ask Him to enable me to do what I have regulated for myself, that thus I may be able to give a better account of my time?—And

beside that, to put a right spirit within me; that I may be always kind and gentle with my friends; ever ready to do any little thing to please and assist them in any way; and never hesitate about putting myself out for them.—And that God will grant me strength to do this; and ever to keep Him in my thoughts; and to trust entirely in Him; is my earnest prayer.—And not to live for myself alone, but try in every way, with God's help, to overcome my selfishness, and to bend my proud spirit that I may become humble and meek, more fit to be a disciple of the lowly Jesus." Thus she gave great promise of future usefulness, and of being a rich blessing to many now bereaved of her society in this world, whom let us pray that "the Father of mercies and God of all consolation" may continue to bless and comfort in the sore trial which (no doubt for their spiritual profit and increased usefulness) He has seen fit to lay upon them. Having given the highest satisfaction as a pupil in the Sunday School of this Church, from its first establishment under the charge of the present Minister, that institution has, for several years, enjoyed the benefit of her services as a diligent, faithful, and persevering teacher, communicating to others what she herself received from her Saviour; and while thus endeavouring to assist in "training up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," she found, from experience, that such employment and heavenly "charity is twice blest in giving and receiving:" she herself being taught of God while acting as His instrument in making known to those committed to her charge the saving truths of the Gospel. She was ever forward in all good works of piety and benevolence; her time and influence were always readily enlisted in the cause of God: and her

assiduous and successful labours in promoting the objects of The Church Society, testified that she duly recognized the claims of that excellent Institution.

And now, while "she rests from her labours, her works do follow her;" and the "fruits of the Spirit, which are in all goodness, righteousness, and truth," prove the reality of her faith in Christ. How eminently "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," those evidences of being "led by the Spirit" of God, were exhibited in her brief but happy life. When did any one see her calm and placid countenance ruffled even by a passing emotion of unamiable temper? Ever the same in life, death made no difference there, except that we imagined (and could it have been only imagination?) that it bore the impress of Angelic happiness left by the parting spirit. As long as that fair brow was present to our view, the Holy Cross of Baptism seemed to rest upon its beautiful expanse.

One of those who were privileged to watch by her side writes in these terms:—"During our beloved Mary's illness, H—— asked her what he should read to her, she immediately mentioned the fifty-first and twenty-third Psalms."—What a beautifully expressive choice; the first, of the deepest penitence; the other, of confident trust and love. How truly she could say, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—"On asking her, if she could trust all to her Saviour, she answered, 'Oh, yes, though

I have temptations sometimes, still I am quite resigned.' She said, 'I have never done anything right.'"—And here let me again pause to mark the evidence that she was taught of God, which this heartfelt expression gives us.—"But the calm trust in her Saviour never seemed shaken. On speaking of my tender love for her, and my sorrow at the thought of losing her, she said, 'Will it not be great happiness when we all meet *there*.' She asked me to comfort the beloved ones whom she was about to leave; but not one word of regret ever passed her lips, that she was taken so young, and from so many that loved her. She said, she 'could leave all and go to her Saviour.' On being asked if she could command her attention long enough to partake of the Holy Sacrament, she said, 'I must,' and seemed anxious to take nourishment to sustain her. She said, 'I do not think I can rise up.' I said, 'No, dear Mary, you must not attempt it, but try and be quite calm.' 'Yes, dear Aunt,' she said, with a sweet placid look. Blessed be God that the precious loved one is in perfect happiness, and can never feel pain or sorrow more."

It was her prayer, and that of others for her, that she might retain her senses to the last, and be free from distracting pain, or any anticipated paroxysm: and signally were these petitions answered. Happy in the ministrations and services of those whom she truly loved, most gently was she led "through the valley of the shadow of death." The few days which elapsed from the time that serious apprehensions were entertained, witnessed no pain or suffering. Life ebbed away, like the calm summer tide, by almost imperceptible degrees; and when, after saying "I will soon be at home," she sweetly "fell asleep in Jesus," were it not for the cessation of the pulse, one could hardly be sure that her spirit had fled.

And let me ask, brethren, in the words of an eloquent divine* of the American Church, "Why should human nature shrink back in dread from the path, over which the Master hath trodden? Why should we so often stand 'shivering on the brink afraid to launch away?' Why should we array the Last Messenger, who releases us from our warfare, with every attribute of terror, till the heart quails at his approach? Even from the twilight knowledge of an ancient and heathen philosophy, we may learn a better lesson. There he was represented as but the twin-brother of sleep; as if he only called us to a slumber deeper and longer than that which each night overtakes us. There, in the lands in which this mythology prevailed, on many a mouldering tomb is still found the sculptured image of the Angel of Death, and we behold him in the form of a youth, his wings folded in repose, and his torch inverted. All is serene, peaceful and beautiful. Surely then the Christian, to whom all is certainty, may well say, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' Trusting in no dim speculations, he 'knows in Whom he has believed, and that He is able to keep that which he has committed to Him against that day.'—Standing by the Cross on Calvary, the darkness rolls away from the landscape which stretches out before him, and he sees his path plainly marked. It passes indeed through the wilderness, and down into the dark valley of the Shadow of Death, and over the troubled waters of Jordan, yet he traces it up to the gates of the New Jerusalem,—the Eternal City of his God. This, then, is his hope which should enable him to greet the Monarch of

* The Rev. W. Ingraham Kip; the perusal of whose works, entitled, "The Lenten Fast," and "The Double Witness of the Church," I take this opportunity of strongly recommending.

the Tomb with a calmness which no earthly philosophy could ever give. He realizes that 'through the grave and gate of death he shall pass to his glorious resurrection, for His merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.' "

May we also "die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like" hers, whose departure we deplore: though we sorrow not on her account, for "precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of His Saints."

And now, brethren, what remains, but to exhort you to follow this dear young saint, as she followed Christ.—Her religion was a beautiful specimen of that "wisdom which cometh from above, which is pure, gentle, peaceable, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy." Her's was that "meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." She was, indeed, in the expressive language of Scripture, "clothed with humility."

Kind, gentle, and humble minded, she never could cause pain to any one by an expression savouring of harshness; and we would desire, therefore, in setting forth her example, by which, "being dead, she yet speaketh," carefully to refrain from wounding the spirit of any. Yet we cannot but remark what a rebuke her life has given to all, who, in "making provision for the flesh" exclusively, are wasting the time given them in which to "work out their salvation." And surely the feelings, partaking almost of anger and "indignation" against ourselves, which we must experience in comparing our life with her's; the emotions of shame and sorrow reproaching us for our spiritual sloth and negligence, which cannot fail to be awakened within us by the consideration of her youthful maturity in the spiritual life, far from arousing in our minds the spirit of hateful envy,

or any shade of bitterness, excite rather that solemn awe with which, we can imagine, we should hear the words of one who had returned from Paradise; to warn us of the danger of our worldliness, and to invite us to preparation for those blissful regions which she has attained through faith. When we consider how many years we have lived in this world more than were allotted to her, and yet how far she has surpassed us in running the race for immortality on the course which is terminated by the crown of everlasting glory; surely we should feel rebuked and put to shame: we should earnestly pray that grace may yet be given to us to "redeem the time" we have lost; and strenuously resolve on new and more vigorous exertions, remembering that it is not by such half-hearted and wavering efforts as too easily satisfy us, that the trophies of heavenly glory are to be won. If, in penitent conviction, we feel that we have hitherto lost time and opportunity, let us be the more diligent to make the most of what remains. "Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found; call ye upon Him, while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

But while reminding the more advanced in age of the lessons of wisdom which may be read in the life and death of this youthful saint, it is more especially those who are yet in the morning of their days to whom I would now address myself. My young friends, if you are at any time, for a moment, tempted to mix up ideas of sorrow and gloom with that of religion, think of the unvaried calm and happiness of our dear sister's days; and know, that though the wild exuberance of mirth, and the tumult

of passionate gaiety, may be foreign to a spirit taught of God, yet you have, at least, one proof before you, that "the ways of heavenly wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

True it is, that the voyage of life, however brief, is seldom unvexed by storms; to few is vouchsafed, for any length of time, the smoothness of a summer sea; but the cause of this is to be found, for the most part, in the wilfulness and waywardness of our own hearts. Our stubborn dispositions must be tamed by the stern discipline of painful trials; and our rebellion against God's precepts, together with our resistance to the strivings of His Holy Spirit, give Satan an advantage over us, which that subtle and malignant spirit well knows how to use to our misery, and, unless restrained by a superior power, to our destruction. "God is love," and "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men;" but that very love causes Him, sometimes, to let us "eat of the fruit of our own ways, and be filled with our own devices," "that we may know and see that it is an evil thing and bitter to have forsaken the Lord our God, and that His fear is not in us." Would we resign ourselves to His guidance, He would "lead us beside the quiet waters" of peace: would we but listen to "the still small voice" that gently whispers to our souls "this is the way, walk ye in it," the Lord never need lay bare His mighty arm, and send abroad the thunders of His judgments to arouse and terrify a guilty world.

Our Heavenly Father does nothing in vain; it is "if need be" that "we are in heaviness for a season." And even in trials, mercy shines pre-eminent: never was any affliction so great but that the afflicted, if taught of God, could see much love mingled with and tempering the

trial. And why does He chasten us, sometimes by sending us affliction, sometimes by permitting our own sins and their results to trouble us? Is it not "for our profit, that we may be made partakers of his holiness?" Be not afraid then, dear young friends, be not afraid of giving yourselves up implicitly, as the lambs of His fold, to the care and guidance of "the Good Shepherd."

The tender and compassionate Saviour this day says to you, in the words of the text, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." And in the happy life and peaceful death of the sainted one whom He has taken to Himself, He has exemplified the truth of His gracious declaration. Let then this instance encourage you to seek the Lord in the early morning of your days, confident that, in obeying His voice, you are ensuring your truest happiness. Pray that "the love of God may be shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto you:" and dread, as the severest judgment, being left to yourselves, to become "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

Let me press upon you the obligations you are under to seek the Lord early. You were consecrated to Him in Holy Baptism, and in connection with the privileges then bestowed upon you, a solemn engagement was entered into in your name, and on your behalf, that you should renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil; that you should believe in and love the Lord, and dedicate yourselves entirely to His service. This vow you are publicly before the congregation to avow and acknowledge as binding you to obedience, and in your own person to ratify it in the holy rite of Confirmation. Can you too soon prepare for the due and profitable observance of that most interesting ordinance of the Church?

Consider how happy you will be through life, when you are sure of being the objects of the Saviour's care and love; and think of your felicity in death, entering into Paradise, and leaving the richest consolation to those who mourn your loss.

And you, dear friends, who have been Confirmed, what were your feelings and disposition in that solemn rite, and how have you acted up to its obligations? Are you "following on to know the Lord," and to seek Him in all the ordinances of His Church? Are you constant and faithful in your attendance at His Holy Table? Oh! remember what a rich banquet of grace and love is spread for you in that heavenly feast; and consider how fully you will there experience the accomplishment of the gracious promise, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." This great and principal means of grace was never willingly left unshared by our beloved sister; and you see in her the blessed effects of faith keeping the last command of Christ. Do not, then, hesitate thus to seek the Lord; and wait not till the freshness of youth is gone, as if it were ever too early to secure the blessings which Christ has inseparably connected with duly partaking of this crowning ordinance. If the Lord leave you in life to witness many years, they must, in a great measure be years of sorrow and disappointment; if you have no support from God's grace they will indeed be days of evil and bitterness. "Remember, then, your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, in which you shall say, I have no pleasure in them."

A writer, already quoted, speaking of "the sorrowful process of man's life," says, "One by one the objects in which he has garnered up his affections pass away, until

often, in the grey twilight of his days, he is left alone and desolate. Then, indeed, if he look around him for sympathy, from the busy, earnest world about him, there comes forth no response. The flowers of his earthly Paradise are faded, and its cisterns broken. Memory lifts up her voice within him, like the Archangel's trump, summoning from their forgotten graves thoughts and scenes which long since had passed away. Their images rise up mournfully, as it were to mock him, for he knows that the reality can never return. For him is reserved only the lonely night, which, stealing insensibly on, is ever deepening its shadows about his path.

"When therefore this world thus vanishes away, and life by its own vicissitudes has taught him the lesson of its vanity,—when nothing but evils seem to 'choke Time's groaning tide,'—how cheering is the thought, that the future yet remains to be his certain heritage! He raises his eyes above the gathering darkness and the clouds which surround him, and beholds beyond them, that land which is always radiant with a celestial glory. The past, with its sorrowful memories, is forgotten, and he lives only in the anticipations of the future. He is not driven forward to the coming world without 'knowing the things that shall befall him there.' He is sustained by the 'hope which maketh not ashamed.' And thus he passes along through the remaining days of his pilgrimage; sharing in that spirit which the old artists attempted to embody in their delineations of Faith, when they represented her treading a rugged and thorny road, yet clasping the Cross to her heart, and her eyes intently fixed upon the calm, clear heavens above. He feels that death shall only come like the Angel to the Apostles, bursting the bars of his prison-house, and leading him forth to the

light and to the day. His spirit pines within him for the sweet waters of the River of Life. The voices of the dead, too, who have gone before, come solemnly to his ears, as they urge him to press onward to the promised land. There his wanderings shall end, and the pilgrim staff be for ever cast aside. There he shall be at peace in the mansions of rest, with the mighty army of patriarchs and apostles, and confessors and martyrs, who have already slept in the faith. Cheered by a brighter manifestation of his Master's presence than can be his lot in this world, he shall await his full reward, and the crown which shall be given him at the last day.

"Thus ages shall glide by, until the history of this world is completed, and the number of the elect made up. Then, our long expected Lord shall descend: the dust of each one of the saints be collected from the four winds, united again to its former partner, as the spirit comes forth from its resting place, and all shall gather around the throne of Him whom they followed while on earth, ready to receive the sentence, 'Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.' This shall be the GREAT EASTER OF THE EARTH." *

And now, brethren, I conclude, praying that God, in His infinite mercy, may grant that the lessons which He is teaching us all in this providential dispensation, may, by His grace, be so deeply grafted in our hearts, that no craft nor subtlety of Satan may cause them to fail of their effect. Who is there in our community to whom the striking event, which has called forth these observations, has not been productive of deep and powerful emotion? May the grace of God so order it, that to none it

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* Kip's Lenten Fast.

may have spoken in vain. If a more heavy and more home-blow is needed to arouse the negligent from their fatal dream of security, severe as it must be, it will be a mercy when it comes.

And now, blessing God for the example of this dear young saint, and rejoicing in her happiness, let us give all the glory to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one infinite and eternal Jehovah, to whom be ascribed all honour, glory, might, majesty and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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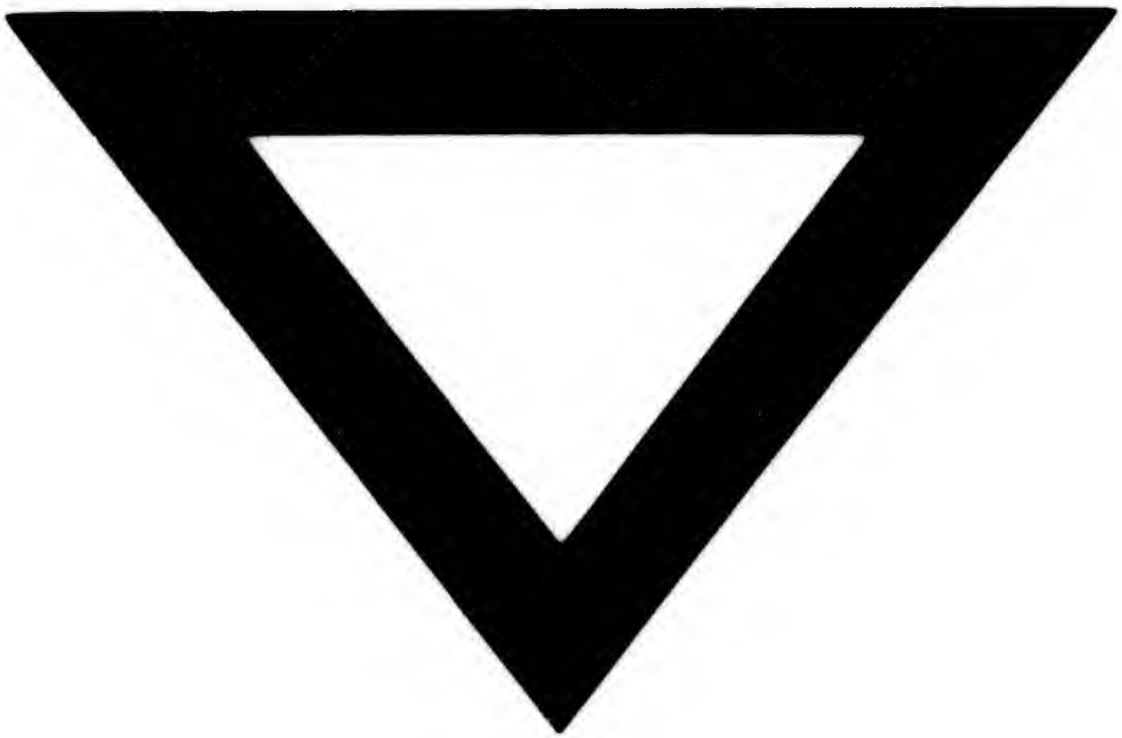
"O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered; make us, we beseech Thee, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life; and let Thy Holy Spirit lead us through this vale of misery, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives: That, when we shall have served Thee in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the Catholic Church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope; in favour with Thee our God, and in perfect charity with the world. All which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

*Collect in the American Service for the Visitation of the Sick.*